



# Toward Elimination

Newsletter for State Partners in HAI Prevention

September 2010

## September marks ARRA HAI ELC Program's First Anniversary

The Healthcare-associated Infections (HAI) Program is off to a great start! It's hard to believe that a year has passed since 49 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico were first funded to implement activities for building and sustaining the program, and to work toward the goal of HAI elimination.

With HAIs remaining one of the most preventable causes of mortality in the United States, our work to help make healthcare safer for all remains a priority. The HAI Program continues to gain momentum now that all states have submitted HAI plans and activities are underway.



DHQP's Division Director, Denise Cardo, shares our vision of safer healthcare through reducing, and ultimately eliminating, healthcare-associated infections.

*"It is CDC's priority to work with states and*

*territories through this innovative ARRA-funded partnership to make significant steps in improving patient safety and eliminating healthcare-associated infections in facilities throughout the United States."*

By working together and sharing resources, experiences, challenges, and successes, we are preparing for another productive year.

## Reminder: Recovery Act HAI Grantee Meeting

The Second Annual HAI Recovery Act Grantee meeting will be held at the CDC Global Communications Center in Atlanta on October 18-19, 2010.

DHQP, in conjunction with HHS, will sponsor all conference travel and lodging expenses for the 52 HAI state coordinators. If you haven't already registered, contact your PHA.

## CMS Rule

CMS recently released a new rule which refers to HAI reporting requirements for Medicare-eligible hospitals that participate in the CMS pay-for-reporting program. More than 3,500 hospitals will soon use CDC's NHSN to report CLABSI data to CMS. In turn, CDC will post the information on the HHS publicly accessible Hospital Compare Website.

The release from CMS emphasizes the fact that HAI rates are a significant measure of healthcare quality. It is encouraging to see CMS build upon its work in preventing healthcare-acquired conditions, including HAIs. The final rule was placed on the Federal Register on July 30, 2010.

- For more information on Hospital Compare, visit [www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov](http://www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov)
- The CMS rule can be found on the *Federal Register* under *Special Filings* at [www.ofr.gov/inspection.aspx#special](http://www.ofr.gov/inspection.aspx#special)
- Participate in CMS Rule discussions on CDC's Safe Healthcare Blog: [blogs.cdc.gov/safehealthcare](http://blogs.cdc.gov/safehealthcare)

## New EPI-X HAI Forum

DHQP is pleased to announce the development of a new EPI-X HAI forum as a component of CDC's secure Web-based communications network. EPI-X is widely used by public health officials to share preliminary data from outbreak investigations as well as a place for in-depth discussions about specific public health issues.

DHQP's HAI forum will provide a place to share and archive materials and resources for our health department partners in support of HAI prevention activities and will replace other forums such as the NHSN State Users Web Board. Also, this voluntary forum will serve as a secure medium for health departments to post resources and observations, with the hope of fostering an open and diverse HAI community with mutual programmatic objectives.

Please watch for an announcement from your PHA about the launch of the forum.

## Highlight: Colorado

An early success of Colorado's Emerging Infections Program (EIP) was the hiring of an experienced infectious disease physician with a public health background to serve on the EIP Healthcare-associated Infections/Community Interface (HAIC) Steering Group, to lead ARRA-funded HAIC projects at the site. The primary project has been the EIP HAI/Antimicrobial Use Prevalence Survey, a point prevalence survey. Surveys are currently being conducted across the sites.

An additional project being funded by the ARRA HAI EIP grant includes a denominator data collection simplification and validation project for CLABSI surveillance in acute care facilities. Data collection is scheduled to begin in Fall 2010.

For more information on Colorado's EIP activities, contact Julie Duran at [jduran@cdphe.state.co.us](mailto:jduran@cdphe.state.co.us).

## ELC/EIP Grantee Calls

**SSI Infection-Specific Call:**  
September 13, 3PM-4PM ET

**MRSA Infection-Specific Call:**  
September 20, 1PM-1:30PM ET

**LTC Discussion:**  
September 23, 1PM-2PM ET

**C. diff Infection-Specific Call:**  
September 28, 1PM-2PM ET

**CLABSI Infection-Specific Call:**  
Postponed until October 2010

**Your PHAs will send the bridge line, password, and Webinar URL information for these calls.**